

REGULATORY FOCUS BULLETIN

FILE TOPIC: Pharmacy

DATE: March 1997

Many medications have recommendations to be administered with food to prevent GI related adverse effects (e.g., NSAIDs), and physician orders for these medications read "...with food." Would a package of graham crackers or a package of saltines meet the intent of the order and satisfy regulations for those drugs which require administration with food? (The physician is satisfied with graham crackers or saltines.)

A package of graham crackers contains three 2 1/2" x 2 1/2" crackers and a package of saltines contains two 2" x 2" crackers, and are acceptable amounts of food to be used when administering medications. Although there are no specific parameters given for the amounts of food to be taken with medications, a teaspoon of applesauce would not meet the intent "with food." Three to four ounces of semi-solid food is recommended. The "with food" is intended to prevent possible GI distress and/or aid in drug absorption. Therefore, mealtime would be an appropriate schedule unless otherwise ordered or contraindicated.